



Drugs in America: A Documentary History

By David F. Musto

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Most Americans would be surprised to learn that large quantities of beer were brought over on the Puritan ships and that the hallowed Puritans were fond of drink. How many today realize that hemp was once one of our most lucrative cash crops encouraged by President John Adams and promoted by the Agriculture department? Or that cocaine, opium and heroin had several waves of popularity in this century and the last? Drugs and alcohol have been with us from the start. So have attempts to control or eliminate their use. In the first anthology of its kind, renowned drug policy expert David Musto chronicles the rise and fall and rise again of the most popular mind altering substances in the United States: alcohol, marijuana, cocaine and opiates.

In the section on alcohol we hear the Reverend Lyman Beecher, prominent radical abolitionist and father of Harriet Beecher Stowe, thundering against the evils of alcohol in 1826. We read medical documents that show how the first stirrings of concern about what is now termed fetal-alcohol syndrome in 1910 turned public opinion against drinking and helped move the country toward Prohibition. The sections on illegal drugs contain surprises as well.

With accessible, jargon-free introductions this anthology puts drug and alcohol use at the center of American culture. At this critical point in the "war on drugs" if we do not appreciate our drug and alcohol history we may become captive to the powerful emotions that lead to draconian repression, exaggeration, or apathy and silence.

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Editorial Review

Review

"Anyone with an interest in social history will find this book fascinating. . . . A valuable resource and an interesting read."

— *Drugs and Alcohol Review*

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"The sermons, speeches, medical arguments, and policy papers gathered here adequately convey changing attitudes toward these sometimes licit, sometimes illicit substances. For classes in public policy, reform, or public health or for individuals interested in these areas, this book will be exceedingly informative and useful."

—*Journal of the History of Medicine*

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"It is a powerful, clearly written, and well-researched reference on the history of drugs in the U.S...Readers will learn much about the temperance movements and the introduction of cocaine into the American market, including coca Cola products."

—*Choice*

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"This volume is an ambitious attempt to provide, through a collection of primary sources, an overview of the US experience with drugs and drug control. . . . *Drugs in America* is a splendidly edited volume, of interest both to the substance abuse specialist and the general reader."

—*Jama: Journal of the American Medical Association*

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About the Author

David F. Musto M.D. is Professor of the History of Medicine and Child Psychiatry at the Yale School of Medicine and Lecturer of History and American Studies at Yale University. He is the author of **The American Disease: Origins of Narcotic Control**.

Users Review

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